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## BACON AND SHAKSPERE: DOES IT MATTER?

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I will now deal with what I call "The Strange Case of Mr. Osbert Sitwell." In *The Week-End Review* there appeared some time ago an article by Mr. Sitwell entitled "A Note on Charles Dickens." That part of it which dealt with Dickens was excellent, but he wrote that if England were suddenly submerged and nothing left save the works of two authors, Shakespeare and Dickens, Shakespeare "would be the guide to her permanent and rustic life, to that ideal country of green, deep lanes and high green banks, of wild flowers and oaks and elm trees, of scented limes and mysterious murmurings in the woods at night, and of the old grey walls of hall and cottage buttressed against time and padded with moss and lichen."

Was ever an author's work and what it stands for less accurately envisaged? At some time or another "Shakespeare" referred to practically everything. A scene in the "*Merry Wives*" is enacted under Herne's oak, and in "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*," with a broad brush, "Shakespeare" paints the landscape and we get such delightful things as "I know a bank where the wild thyme blows, Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows, quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine, With sweet musk roses and with eglantine"; but this would hardly cover Mr. Sitwell's "country of deep, green lanes, and high green banks"; and if it did I would remind Mr. Sitwell that the scene of this play is in a wood near Athens! There was fine opportunity for the description of a hall in

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"*As you Like It*," but unfortunately "Shakespeare" omits to describe Oliver's house in an orchard of which the play opens, and there is no description of the trees in the forest of Arden, though Orlando fastens thereon the verses that Rosalind finds.

There is nothing here of that "permanent and rustic life," or of that "ideal country of green, deep lanes" so strangely attributed to "Shakespeare" by Mr. Sitwell: and if he cannot find it in these Plays I do not know where he will seek for his justification, for of the thirty-six plays he would be most likely to find it in one or other of these three.

Never before have I read that the outstanding merit of "Shakespeare" lies in description of oaks and elm trees and of scented limes, and a description of a homely cottage is not, to my knowledge, to be found in any one of the Plays! Various authors and poets—not of Elizabethan but of later times—occur to one as far more worthy than "Shakespeare" to wear this particular laurel which Mr. Sitwell would so gracefully bind upon Shakespeare's brow.

Taverns, of course, are made to house such likeable rascals as Falstaff, but if Mr. Sitwell gives the matter more reflection he will have to admit that they are not *described* in the Plays, and that, for our mental vision of them, we have to rely upon the work of those artists who have illustrated them, or upon the craft of the stage manager. "Shakespeare" describes neither their interior nor exterior, though, such is the vitality of his characters that we seem to see the very places in which they appear.

May I respectfully suggest to Mr. Sitwell that the genius of "Shakespeare"—apart from the transcendental quality of the poetry—lies in its amazing character delineations, profound philosophic utterances and deep insight into, and portrayal of, every human emotion?

Is it possible that Mr. Sitwell's amazing lapse was due to the fact that he accepts the orthodox view concerning the authorship of the immortal Plays that we know as "Shakespeare"? If he really thinks that the greatest

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literary genius of this or any other day, of this or any other country, was brought up in the cottage at Stratford-upon-Avon, and which at the time of the birth of twins to Mrs. William, was occupied by no less than twelve persons, he might, in a moment of mental aberration, conceive the impression that such a man did—though in fact he did not—describe cottages, if not halls “buttressed against time and studded with moss and lichen.”

As further matter for Mr. Sitwell's consideration I might mention that except for a wonderful description of the interior of a herbalist's establishment in Verona, in “*Romeo and Juliet*” the only building described in “Shakespeare” is the Tower of London, and that even in that case it is of its history, rather than its architecture, that Shakespeare wrote. I might also remind Mr. Sitwell that Mr. Masfield in his criticism of the “*Merry Wives of Windsor*” remarks quite correctly that that is “the only play which treats exclusively of English country society.”

Another illustration of this tendency of the orthodox belief to occasion futile comment is provided by a remark of Willian Hazlitt upon “*Coriolanus*” in a book entitled “*Characters of Shakespear's Plays*.” He says “Shakespear has in this play shown himself well versed in history and state affairs. Anyone who studies it may save himself the trouble of reading Burke's “*Reflections*” or Pain's “*Rights of Man*,” or the debates in both Houses of Parliament since the French revolution. The arguments for and against aristocracy or democracy, on the privileges of the few and the claims of the many are here very ably handled, with the spirit of a poet and the acuteness of a philosopher. Shakespear himself” he says, “seems to have had a leaning to the arbitrary side of the question, perhaps from some feeling of *contempt for his own origin*.” An otherwise excellent piece of criticism is completely spoiled by that foolish conclusion. As a matter of fact I do not think there is recorded in history the case of a man, who became really great, who was ashamed of his origin.

Had Shakspere really risen to the height he is supposed to have done I very much doubt that he would have re-



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ferred in such consistently contemptuous terms to the proletariat as does the author of the "Shakespeare" Plays.

Another example: Prof. Brandes, in his "*William Shakspeare*," dealing with the same play observes "His first Roman drama testifies to his innately anti-democratic tendencies. He seized with avidity upon every instance in Plutarch of the stupidity and brutality of the masses." But then the Professor adds:—"With his necessarily slight historical knowledge and insight Shakespeare would look upon the old days of both Rome and England in precisely the same light in which he saw his own times." "With his necessarily slight historical knowledge"! Why "necessarily and why 'slight', when Hazlitt has just told us how well versed the author was in both history and state affairs? and when every play testifies to an exceptional knowledge of both? And surely no man in the world had greater insight? Each critic confutes his predecessors and invariably it will be found that whenever they talk nonsense the origin of it is to be found in the belief in the miracle theory of the authorship.

Bernard Shaw also suffers from this influence. Coupled with his thrasonical disposition this has, I believe, enabled him to indicate that he thinks he can write as well as "Shakespeare," though no one else can be found to share that view. In his preface to "*St. Joan*," which is nearly as long as the play, and much more interesting, Shaw says:—"There is not a breath of medieval atmosphere in Shakespeare's histories" . . . His Kings are not statesmen, his cardinals have no religion: a novice can read his plays from one end to the other without learning that the world is governed by forces expressing themselves in religions and laws which make epochs rather than by vulgarly ambitious individuals who make rows. 'The divinity which shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will,' is mentioned fatalistically only to be forgotten immediately like a passing vague apprehension.'" And so forth and so on, showing you what a wonderful fellow Shaw is. If it be true to say that Shakespeare's kings are not statesmen (why should

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they be? Quite often they were not, though very kingly) and that his cardinals had no religion, it would require some higher authority than Shaw's to make me believe that the kings he (Shaw) describes were in fact statesmen or that his cardinals were really religious.

The examples I have given justify I think my contention that the conception of a miraculous "Shakespeare" produces (a) an atmosphere uncondusive to study of the immortal plays and (b) criticism that tends to minimise their merit. I can now brush aside all those various objections to which I referred, as being urged against the endeavour to dislodge the Stratford image, for no true lover of "Shakespeare" can contemplate with equanimity the perpetuation of a myth so manifestly damaging.

To the objection that as Francis Bacon desired to remain unknown as the author, we who strive to draw aside the veil do him a disservice, I reply that while there were at the time the Plays appeared, cogent reasons why the true authorship of them should not be known, Father Time, with his hourglass and sickle, has long since removed them; and "as ignorance is the curse of God, knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven," this point no longer pricks.

In further definition of the Baconian's attitude I would inform our critics that—apart altogether from the many evidential links that connect Francis Bacon with "Shakespeare", we take our stand upon this rock: that the immortal plays contain *inherent* proof of being the creation of a well-travelled nobleman, who was steeped in knowledge of the world's philosophies and a profound student (inter alia) of Science, History, Law and Literature.

I propose to take advantage of the occasion to offer some iurther criticism of the critics, not in illustration of femarks derogatory to "Shakespeare," but as demonstrating generally the confusion of thought into which they are red by the orthodox view.

That brilliant journalist Arthur Machen in a book entitled "A Christmas Book", edited by D. B. Wyndham Lewis, writes "The chief passion of Shakespeare's life, was Stratford on Avon. He never forgot it . . . . Romeo



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and Juliet, Hamlet, Othello—so many steps nearer to the haven where he would be, to the true, secure life he loved." So Mr. Machen imagines it: these marvellous plays were merely money-making vehicles designed to carry the author home. But why, if he so loved Stratford on Avon, does he never mention that village, and why does he so often mention St. Albans? Then Mr. Machen adds, "William Shakespeare saw the heads of men spiked on London Bridge," that "he lived in a red hot world": that "our tea-party Dons do not begin to have the elementary data . . . for the understanding of Shakespeare."

I do not myself think that the sight of bloody heads impaled on spikes really assisted the author to compose *Romeo and Juliet* or indeed either of the plays mentioned, but, if it did, it furnished no argument in favour of the Stratford myth in view of the fact that Francis Bacon lived in the same age and would have enjoyed the same opportunity to see the same sights. But perhaps Mr. Machen means to infer (and in this case he would be right) that Sir Francis would be less prone to employ so many hours gaping at the gallows. Then he says "To the horrible people who are best designated as Dons it is repulsive that this young wastrel, with a possible Grammar school education, should have written the finest things in the world." To which I answer it is repulsive—in the sense of being repulsively stupid—to think that work so much superior to anything even that Mr. Machen ever wrote could have been composed by a man whose principal activity on his return to that haven from which he set out, appears to have been money-lending and the suing of impecunious debtors, and whose literary capacity was quite obviously sorely tried whenever he had occasion to exercise it to the extent of signing his own name! "And so has arisen" continues Mr. Machen "the most marvellous folly of the world: the Baconian hypothesis."

Mr. Wyndham Lewis' only excuse for the inclusion of this ridiculous diatribe of Mr. Machen's in a book which professes to be an Anthology of Xmas tales would appear to lie in the fact that Mr. Machen concludes it with this

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sonorous exhortation:—"May this January, this Twelfth night, bring us better sense, as we sit about our sea-coal fire." We extend the same wish to Mr. Machen without further comment upon his witless arrogance, as we sit by our anthracite stove!

Without further comment, that is, except to remark that there are, apparently, two types of controversialists. There are those who as the Poet Laureate said, are willing, slothfully, to accept a miraculous explanation for extraordinary events of any or every kind, rather than exert themselves to solve upon rational grounds the problems they present. These men have been led in droves, like sheep, by the witch-doctors of the world since the beginning of time! And there are those whose experience of life is such that they will accept the suggestion of supernatural agencies, if ever, only as a last resort, when all logical avenues have been explored and found wanting. A chacun son gout! "Shakespeare" as the product of the finest intellect ever bestowed upon the children of men is, in all conscience, sufficiently marvellous. "Shakespeare" as the offspring of Mr. Machen's "wastrel" of Warwickshire is a palpable absurdity.

Mr. Machen suggests that if Baconians were to read Ben Jonson's description of a voyage down the Fleet ditch it would probably turn their dainty stomachs. I suggest that if Mr. Machen would take the trouble to read some of the thirty-six elegies of Lord Verulam that were written in Latin on the occasion of his death, and which acclaim him as the Apollo of the Muses, as the "nerve centre of genius, and the jewel most precious of letters concealed," and would ponder especially that one which runs "none who survive him can marry so sweetly Themis, the Goddess of Law, to Pallas, the Goddess of Wisdom," it might assist him to turn his mind from vulgar abuse to consideration of the Baconian theory.

There is scarcely an assertion of one critic concerning "Shakespeare" that has not been torn to ribbons by another; indeed a case for the Baconian authorship of the Shakespeare Plays could be prepared entirely from quota-



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tions from the works of the orthodox critics! In the process of mutual contradiction each in turn says something that is true!

Of all the foolish things for a literary critic to say, the following, which I quote from "*The Shakespeare Apocrypha*," by Mr. S. F. Tucker Brooke, takes, I think, pride of place. After laudatory references to "*Arden of Feversham*" and "*The Two Noble Kinsmen*" he says that there are three other plays, the authorship of which is uncertain, that "rise in parts to an equal height of poetry." These are "*Edward III*," "*A Yorkshire Tragedy*," and "*Sir Thomas More*." I do not propose now to discuss whether the last mentioned plays should or should not be attributed to Francis Bacon, though some of the orthodox critics contend that they were written wholly or partly by him who wrote "Shakespeare." What I want particularly to call attention to is his remark that "such literary phenomena evolve themselves, they are not created: the writer does no more than drift down the current of theatrical convention"! I ask you and all those of any literary experience to ponder that amazing statement. Such literary phenomena are "not created," mark you that! and you are told in effect that if you would become a great poet or playwright all you have to do is to "drift down the current of theatrical convention." The blood and tears, the sweat and time, the patient years of study and practice that go to the making of anyone whose ambition it is to gain literary laurels, go for nothing if we are to accept as meaning anything at all this statement of Mr. Tucker Brooke. Put away your books, you budding authors, burn no more the midnight oil, nor care a toss about the niceness of a word. Drift, drift down the current of the literary tide, for that is all you have to do, though Ben Jonson in his ignorance, wrote:—

"Who casts to write a living line must sweat . . .  
And strike the second heat upon the anvil."

How can one account for the writing of such arrant nonsense by an educated gentleman?

I can only suppose that this priceless pearl was born of



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Mr. Tucker Brooke's irritability at his inability to explain, except upon a miracle basis (having regard to the disreputable lives of the alleged authors) the existence of other blank-verse plays of almost equally transcendent merit.

Discussing the anonymous Play of "*Edward III*," Mr. Tucker Brooke says "since Capell, only Tieck, Collier, Teetgen and Hopkinson—" untrustworthy critics all "—have assigned the entire play to Shakespeare. With one stroke of his pen he wipes out the labours of these other scholars. Having admitted that most of his fellows are in agreement that Shakespeare had a hand in the writing of *Edward III*, his own contribution to the subject is not a little amusing. With great deliberation, he writes "The conscientious critic will pause long before he undertakes to name the actual author—one of the truest poets and most ardent patriots, certainly of his generation," adding "I should like to see this fine, though very imperfect play, recognised as the crown and conclusion of the work of George Peele, a poet who has received scant justice in recent times." He voices this purely personal predilection without a word of reasoning to show why it should be attributed to Peele. But why should he want to have it recognised as the "crown and conclusion" of Peele's work if, as he has asserted, the writing of such works entailed no more effort than is required in drifting down the stream of theatrical convention?

In conclusion I must mention an amusing incident that resulted from my attendance, some few years ago, at a series of pseudo "Shakespeare" lectures which were delivered at the Gresham College by Prof. Foster Watson, D.Litt., M.A., London. These lectures were entitled "*Was Shakespeare a Page Boy?*" "*Was Shakespeare a Schoolmaster?*" and so on. They were designed to infer and leave one under the impression that he was. In support of the Page Boy hypothesis Prof. Watson pointed out that someone had discovered that there lived, at the time, not far from Stratford, Sir Henry Goodere, and that the Stratford Town Council books showed that this nobleman had upon one or more occasions visited the

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village. As John Shakspere was a member of the Town Council, might he not, asked the Professor triumphantly, have had a word with Sir Henry? He could imagine John Shakspere taking him on one side and confiding to him that he had a son whom he would much like Sir Henry to take into his service.

In reply Sir Henry might have said "Certainly: I shall be delighted to give your boy the opportunity of thus acquiring some acquaintance with the manners, customs and habits of speech of people in high society, so necessary for him if, as you tell me, he shows signs of desiring to become a poet!" Feeling that I was being fooled, and my time wasted, I had the temerity to ask the Professor if in the course of his lecture he was going to cite anything at all by way of evidence, or was proposing to confine himself only to wild speculation of this character (inferring that by the method he was pursuing one could come to any conclusion one liked about anyone or anything). The only result was that I was threatened with expulsion by a commissioner!

But magna est veritas et praevalerebit, and happily in the foregoing I have been able to show that it really does matter that we should know who it was who wrote the Immortal Plays.

"The truth of this I think

. . . . so well apparal'ed,

So clear, so shining and so evident,

That it will glimmer through a blind man's eye."



## ELIZABETHAN MANNERS AND MORALS.

(Reprinted from *Baconiana*, April, 1903).

IN his "Bacon-Shakespeare Controversy" (*A Judicial Summing Up*), Lord Penzance alludes to the statement of Pope, that many of the coarsenesses that disfigure the Plays of Shakespeare were interpolated by actors animated by ambition to raise laughter from the groundlings. The theory is an agreeable one, but is it tenable? It is improbable that the Plays as we possess them are precisely as they came from the mind of their author; but if, as is now supposed, Bacon supervised their publication, he must surely be held responsible for not a few of the passages and expressions that dismay the modern reader. Coarseness that can be condoned in an actor becomes culpable in the mouth of a philosophic aristocrat; indeed, not a few will consider it to be irreconcilable with that nobility of purpose that is now being claimed for the Elizabethan drama.

The love that is felt towards Shakespeare has led many commentators to reject as spurious, not only passages, but entire Plays, deemed to be unworthy of him. It is not our purpose to exhibit this officious solicitude for his fame and morals, but rather to note a few facts, the significance of which appears to have altogether eluded Shakespeare's editors.

It is an axiom that no writer can be judged *per se* in the abstract, but only in relation to the manners and customs by which he was environed, nor can we judge the morals of one age by the manners of another. Brand in his "*Antiquities*" observes that "the ancient grossness of our manners would almost exceed belief." On page 296 he gives one peculiarly striking example *taken from a Morality play*. Since then, particularly during the past sixty years, social conditions have so immensely improved that it is difficult, if not impossible, to understand or realise the sheer barbarism that prevailed when Shakespeare wrote. Dazzled by the literature of the period, commentators

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have fallen into the error of measuring the 16th century by Shakespeare. The process should, of course, be reversed, and Shakespeare measured by the savagery of his surroundings.

The true story of the period will, perhaps, never be made public, for no one will dare to print the actual truth. Yet the facts are attainable, and in justice to the writers of the time, should be kept in mind.

Historians tell us that the Court of James discarded the veil of chivalry and courtesy that shrouded the degrading grossness of the preceding reign. Except that picturesque and illusive mist in which time and tradition beautifies every far distance, it is difficult to perceive that any such a veil ever existed; indeed, it is clear that the conditions that prevailed in the Elizabethan Court differed little from semi-barbarism.

The details of Seymour's courtship of the Princess Elizabeth are sufficiently gross, and in later years there are few indications of improvement. Her Majesty the Queen, "despite her culture and insinuating speech . . . used terrible oaths, round and full; she stamped her feet, she thrust about her with a sword, she spat upon her attendants, and behaved, as the French said, like a lioness" (Goadby). She was also accused of having broken the finger of one and gashed the hand of another of her ladies-in-waiting.

There is a strange anecdote of high life recorded by Bacon in his "Apophthegms"; strange, because it is cited as an example of neat and courtly repartee; stranger for the murky light it throws upon the manners and customs of a period when such things were tolerated or possible. The anecdote is that concerning the King of France, his Queen-consort, and the *debonair* behaviour of Count Soissons.

Men and women in those days were amazingly brutal! They fed upon fare, the bare mention of which is repulsive. Hollinshed gives a description of the disgusting food that was popular among ladies of fashion. Tea and coffee were unknown; vegetables were esteemed merely as



medicine. The Queen and her ladies-in-waiting breakfasted upon meat and beer. Forks—bifurcated daggers—were not introduced into England until 1611. Until then, men and women hacked off their meat with their daggers. It is distressing to realise that Shakespeare's heroines shovelled their food into their mouths with their fingers!

An objector wrote recently to the Press proving triumphantly that Shaksper was a genuine author, *because* Bacon by no possibility could have been acquainted, in the unwholesome and artificial atmosphere of the Court, with the types of feminine virtue and purity that figure throughout the Plays. There is, of course, some truth in this. How often and often in the old drama does one come across repulsive language put into the mouth of the virtuous Court lady. Such diction was obviously regarded as no more coarse or immoral than is a pungent piece of slang in the mouth of a modern maiden. "Swear me, Kate," says Hotspur in *Henry IV*. "Swear me, Kate, *like a lady as thou art*, a good mouth-filling oath."

Shakespeare's heroines could never have been limned from life in the English Court. They are rather the spiritual ideals of that miraculous brain upon which, as upon an instrument, Heaven itself was playing.

Cleanliness and sanitation were practically unknown quantities to the Elizabethans. The scavenging of the streets was left mainly to birds of prey; over the narrow and dirty roadways hovered the carrion kite. To hide the unpleasant condition of the houses, the floors were periodically strewed with rushes. This served successfully to disguise the *dirt*, but even the stalwart Elizabethan nostril recoiled at the *odour*, and it became usual to carry a so-called casting bottle—a small utensil carried in the pocket, containing perfume with which the owner disinfected his surroundings.

There is, perhaps, no better method of gaining an insight into the moral atmosphere of the Elizabethan period than to study the contemporary drama. Many Plays are unquestionably transcripts from actual life. Schlegel says without exaggeration that "the indecencies

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in which these poets (the Elizabethan dramatists) allowed themselves to indulge, exceed all conception. The licentiousness of the language is the least evil; many scenes, nay, many whole plots, are so contrived that the very idea of them, not to mention the sight, is a gross insult to modesty."

Viewed from a modern standpoint, this is unquestionable; but, *as seen by contemporaries, the works in question were miracles of morality and nobleness*. There is abundant evidence of the accuracy of this statement. The playwrights themselves evidently had not the slightest perception of their own impropriety, nor, apparently, had any of the audience. Indeed, it is quite customary for what we should call nowadays "Problem Plays," to be prefixed by testimony from an array of public men, to the effect that here will be found "wit *untainted by obscenity*," that "Plautus and Aristophanes were scurrile wits and buffoons in comparison," that so-and-so writes "strong and clear," that herein

"No vast uncivil bulk swells any scene,  
The strength ingenious and the vigour *clean*."

Perhaps the Plays of Philip Massinger display a greater coarseness than those of his predecessors, yet no one that has studied this noble writer will quarrel with the obvious truth that Massinger was "a high-minded artist."

All the evidence tends unmistakably to prove that unnatural horrors from which the modern mind recoils with disgust were, in the Elizabethan and Jacobean period, matters of commonplace occurrence, and considered as fit themes for dramatisation.

The prime and one and only acceptable jest of the period appears to have been to "adhorn" or "cornute" one's neighbour. Chapman in "*All Fools*" (1599) writes bitterly:—

"The course of the world (like the life of man) is said to be divided into several ages. As we into infancy, childhood, youth, and so forward to old age, so the world into the Golden Age, the Silver, the Brass, the Iron, the Leaden, the Wooden, and now into this present age, which we term the *Horned Age* (*italics, Chapman's*) not that but our former ages have enjoyed this benefit as well as our times, but that in ours it is more common."



On St. Luke's Day (St. Luke was the patron saint of Cuckolds!) there was held an orgie known as Horn Fair. Unless the old dramatists grossly libelled and misrepresented the women of the period, chastity was so rare a virtue as to be almost unknown. It is pathetically funny to observe how almost invariably in the Elizabethan drama any woman who repels an admirer's advances is hailed in a flowery oration as a miracle of virtue, a very Phœnix of the age, the sole Arabian bird, a Nonpariel at whose name future generations will incredulously wonder.

Marston in "*The Scourge of Villainy*" (1599) writes:—

'O split my heart, lest it do break with rage,  
To see th' immodest looseness of our age!  
Immodest looseness? Fie! too gentle word!  
When every sign can brothelry afford,  
When lust doth sparkle from our females' eyes,  
And modesty is routed to the skies.'

It is a continual wonder to many how the brutal Elizabethan crowds could have patiently sat through some of Shakespeare's Plays. They have to be mercilessly cut and pruned to render them acceptable to a West End audience at the present day. To the Elizabethan auditor, how infinitely more must much of their philosophy have been *caviare*!

Speaking of the brutality of the 18th century mob—and we may be fairly sure that the nation's manners had improved rather than deteriorated—Sir Walter Besant alludes to it as "brutal beyond all power of words to describe, or imagination to understand; so bestial that one is induced to think that there has never been in any town or in any age a population which could compare them."

Spenser bewails the "ugly barbarism and brutish ignorance" of his times, and refers to the world as "a den of wickedness, deformed with filth and foul iniquity."

The anonymous author of "*Timon of Athens*" (1600) writes:—

"Earth's worse than Hell; let Hell change place with Earth."

Nash, in "*Summer's Last Will and Testament*,"

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published in the same year (1600), utters the same thought:—

“Earth is Hell, true Hell felicity compared with this world, this den of wolves.”

Marston in “*The Scourge of Villainy*” (1599) laments the

“Foul odious sin  
In which our swinish times be wallowing.”

Peele, Ben Jonson, Ford, indeed almost every writer of the period adds his testimony to the same effect.

When the world realises the true social conditions of the 16th century, we shall hear no more about Shakespeare’s “coarseness,” and the appreciation of Elizabethan literature will have begun. We shall marvel how flowers so stately and so fair could ever have reared their heads amid surroundings so “swinish.”



## BACON-SHAKESPEARE AND PROVERBS XXIX, 21.

**T**HIS is the proverb which seems to have inspired Bacon when teaching Elizabeth and James how to manage their servants: "that they should be advanced by steps and not by jumps"; and we see in the works of Shakespeare and Bacon what happens when they are raised by jumps and not by steps, or when "preferment goes by letter and affection and not by old gradation." The word "gradation" (rising step by step) was often in Bacon's mind, as may be seen in the following extracts from his works and speeches, in which we see something of the first in the second; of the second in the third; of the third in the fourth; and so on, and all leading up to Proverbs XXIX. 21.

- (1) "*It must be done per gradus and not per saltum.*"  
(Life IV, pp. 371-2).
- (2) "*He did use to raise them by steps; that he might not lose the profits of the first fruits, which by that course of gradation was multiplied.*"  
(Works VI, p. 41).
- (3) "*And if they should hold on according to the third year's proportion, and not rise on by further gradation your Majesty hath not your end.*"  
(Life V, p. 258).
- (4) "*Her Majesty, notwithstanding her proportions, by often gradations and risings had been raised to the highest elevation, yet was pleased to yield unto it.*"  
(Life II, p. 187).
- (5) "*Your Majesty shall see the true proportion of your own favours, so as you may deliver them forth by measure, that they neither cause surfeit nor faintness.*"  
(Life I, p. 390).

This last was intended by Bacon to be recited before Queen Elizabeth in 1595. Twenty-eight years later (13th October, 1623) he published as follows:—

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*"Qui delicate a pueritia nutrit servum suum, postea sentiet eum contumacem."*

(*De Aug. VIII, II, and Prov. XXIX. 21*).

(He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall afterwards find him wanting in gratitude).

This is the 18th of Bacon's selected parables in the *De Augmentis*, and his explanation of it tells us what he had in mind while writing No. 5 above:—

*"According to the advice of Solomon, princes and masters ought to keep a measure (the Latin word is 'modus') in conferring grace and favour on their servants."*

*"Is triplex est."* (This measure is threefold.)

*"Primo, ut promoveantur per gradus, non per saltus."*

(First, that they be advanced by steps, and not by jumps).

*"Secundo, ut interdum assuefiant repulsæ."*

(Secondly, that they be accustomed to an occasional denial).

*"Tertio (quod bene praecipit Macciavellus) ut habeant prae oculis suis semper aliquid, quo ulterius aspirare possint."*

(Thirdly (as Machiavelli well advises) that they should have ever before their eyes something further to hope for).

This, then, is the way to distribute favours *"by measure, that they neither cause surfeit nor faintness."* (*Life I, p. 390.*) In *Twelfth Night* (V. i. 31) the Duke gives gold to Olivia's servant.

*Servant:* "But that it would be double-dealing, sir, I would you could make it another."

*Duke:* "O, you give me ill counsel." (The good counsel of Solomon is that he be accustomed to an occasional denial).

*Servant:* "Put your grace in your pocket, sir, for this once, and let your flesh and blood obey it."

*Duke:* "Well, I will be so much a sinner, to be a double-dealer: there's another."

## Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs 19

*Servant*: "Primo, secundo, tertio, is a good play . . . the triplex, sir, is a good tripping measure; or the bells of Saint Bennet, sir, may put you in mind; one, two, three."

*Duke*: "You can fool no more money out of me at this throw."

The servant wishes to be advanced by three successive jumps, and regarding 'secundo' the duke gives way, though he admits being a sinner in doing so (sinning against the advice of Solomon); but he draws the line at 'tertio,' yet follows the advice of Machiavel by giving the servant something further to hope for:—

*Duke*: "If you will let your lady know I am here to speak with her, and bring her along with you it may awake my bounty further."

We see much the same in *King Lear* (V. 3. 28), where Edmund says to the Captain:—

"One step I have advanced thee,"

and immediately after, follows the advice of Machiavel, by giving him something further to hope for:

"If thou dost as this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way to noble fortunes."

In dealing with this proverb in the *Advancement of Learning* (1605) Bacon says nothing about *modus, triplex, primo, secundo, tertio*, and it is only when we examine the Latin *De Augmentis* that we notice the difference in the order of the words in *Twelfth Night*—Primo, secundo, tertio, triplex, measure; and that the author is making the duke distribute his favours by measure, that they neither cause surfeit nor faintness.

All Bacon says in the *Advancement of Learning* is this:—  
"Here is signified that if a man begin too high a pitch in his favours, it doth commonly end in unkindness and unthankfulness" (*Adv. II*, 23, 6), the last word seeming to show that he knew the Hebrew version of this proverb; for the Hebrew word means "a thankless man" or "a man wanting in gratitude." In the *De Augmentis*, Bacon says, "unless these particulars (primo, secundo, tertio) be observed,



## 20 Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs

*princes in the end will find from their servants disrespect and obstinacy, instead of gratitude and duty.'*

In *Twelfth Night* the servant, in the end, showed no spark of gratitude, but said, "Let your bounty take a nap, I will awake it anon," so there was neither surfeit nor faintness.

In the 1611 Bible, there is another version of this proverb.

"He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become his son *at the length*."

After saving Henry the Seventh's life at Bosworth Field, Sir William Stanley received vast rewards both in riches and honours; but such was his greed that he became a suitor to the King for the earldom of Chester, thereby wishing to become his son at the length.

*"Blown up with the conceit of his merit, he did not think he had received good measure from the King, at least not pressing down and running over, as he expected."*

(*Works VI*, p. 152, and *Luke VI*, 38).

"Thou shalt think

Though he divide the realm and give the half,  
It is too little, helping him to all."

(*R2*, *V*, 1. 59).

On the other hand, "*the King thought that he that could set him up was the more dangerous to pull him down*."

(*Ib.*, p. 150).

"And he shall think that thou which know'st the way  
To plant unrightful Kings, wilt know again,  
Being ne'er so little urg'd, another way  
To pluck him headlong from the *usurp'd* throne."

(*R2*, *V*, 1. 62).

As to "the *usurp'd* throne": "*You know well, that howsoever Henry the fourth's act by a secret providence of God prevailed, yet it was but a usurpation*."

(*Life V*, p. 145).

Just as the Earl of Northumberland helped Henry the Fourth to usurp the throne of Richard the Second, so Sir William Stanley helped Henry the Seventh to displace Richard the Third.

## Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs 21

Bacon's record of Bosworth Field and after clearly shews that Henry the Seventh began "*too high a pitch in his favours*" to Stanley, and that it ended "*in unkindness and unthankfulness.*" Bacon, however, does not speak of Stanley's unkindness and unthankfulness, but "*that his former benefits were but cheap and lightly regarded by him*" (*Works VI*, p. 152), which is not very different. So far, then, we are left with a faint suspicion that while the author of *Twelfth Night* was writing the primo, secundo, tertio, triplex scene he had in mind Proverbs XXIX. 21. And this suspicion almost amounts to a certainty when we find a reminder of another of Bacon's selected parables on the same page, which is this:—

*"Qui laudat amicum voce alta, surgendo mane, erit illi loco maledictionis."*

(*De Aug. VIII, II*, parabola 33).

"To praise one's friend aloud, rising early, has the same effect as cursing him).

Duke: "How dost thou, my good fellow?"

(*T.N.*, V, I, II).

Clo: "Truly, sir, the better for my foes and the worse for my friends."

Duke: "Just the contrary; the better for thy friends."

Clo: "No, sir, the worse."

Duke: "How can that be?"

Clo: "Marry, sir, they praise me and make an ass of me; now my foes tell me plainly I am an ass: so that by my foes, sir, I profit in the knowledge of myself, and by my friends I am abused."

From this it follows that

"He does me double wrong that wounds me with the flatteries of his tongue." (*R2*, III, 2, 215).

After an interview with his foes, Cardinal Wolsey so profited in the knowledge of himself that, at a subsequent meeting with his servant Cromwell, he said, "I know myself now." (*H8*, III, 2, 378).

In his explanation of "*Qui laudat amicum*" Bacon says:

## 22 Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs

*"Immoderate praises procure envy to the person praised."*

"Your brother . . .  
Hath heard your praises, and this night he means  
To burn the lodging where you use to lie  
And you within it: if he fail of that,  
He will have other means to cut you off."

(*As You, II, 3, 19*).

"And it came to pass, when they were in the field,  
that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew  
him."  
(*Gen., IV, 8*).

But in the play the murder of brother by brother is prevented by the intervention of Adam.

In this same play there is another example of immoderate praises procuring envy to the person praised:—

"But I can tell you that of late this duke  
Hath ta'en displeasure 'gainst his gentle niece,  
Grounded upon no other argument  
But that the people praise her for her virtues."

(*I, 2, 289*).

"Well, heaven forgive him! and forgive us all!  
Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall:  
Some run from brakes of vice, and answer none:  
And some condemned for a fault alone."

(*Meas., II, 1, 37*).

Here, in the last three lines, we have four reminders of Bacon. Let us examine them one by one:—

"Some rise by sin."

*"The rising into place is laborious . . . and it is sometimes base."* (*Essay XI.*)

"Thou art not noble;

For all the accommodations that thou bear'st  
Are nursed by baseness." (*Meas., III, 1, 13*.)

"He then unto the ladder turns his back,  
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees  
By which he did ascend." (*J. Caesar, II, 1, 25*.)

And so, *"by indignities men come to dignities."* (*Essay XI.*)

*"And some by virtue fall."*



## Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs 23

So says Tacitus in his history (*I*, 2); and, as we shall now see, Bacon in dealing with Ecclesiastes VII, 16, borrows from the same passage in Tacitus.

*"Noli esse justus nimium, nec sapientior quam oportet; cur abripiare subito."*

(*De Aug.*, VIII, II, parabola 31).

(Be not over-virtuous, nor make yourself over-wise; for why should you suddenly bring about your own ruin?)

*"There are times, says Tacitus, when great virtues are the surest cause of ruin, and this happens to men eminent for virtue and justice, sometimes suddenly."*

If this is the effect of being virtuous, it is no wonder that Adam should say to Orlando:

*"Why are you virtuous?"*

Know you not, master, to some kind of men  
Their graces serve them but as enemies?  
No more do yours: your virtues, gentle master,  
Are sanctified and holy traitors to you.  
O, what a world is this, when what is comely  
Envenoms him that bears it!"

(*As You*, II, 3, 5).

*"There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness."*

(*Eccles.* VII, 15).

*"A man that hath no virtue in himself ever envieth virtue in others."*

(*Essay IX*).

*"Whom slew Cain but his just and virtuous brother Abel?"*

*"Throughout the whole course of the Scriptures virtue purchaseth envy, and her possessors never escape briery scratches."*

(*Nashe IV*, p. 59).

You may go through one of the rough brakes or thickets in England, full of brambles, bracken and briars, and scratch your skin but not your virtue, which can only be scratched by slander, censure or traducement; and, therefore,

## 24 Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs

“If I am

Traduced by ignorant tongues . . . let me say  
'Tis but the fate of place, and the rough brake  
That virtue must go through. We must not stint  
Our necessary actions, in the fear  
To cope malicious censurers.”

(*H8, I, 2, 71*).

As to censure and slander:—

“No might nor greatness in mortality  
Can censure 'scape; back-wounding calumny  
The whitest virtue strikes. What king so strong  
Can tie up the gall in a slanderous tongue?”

(*Meas., III, 2, 196*).

This is what Bacon had in mind when he said to Queen Elizabeth: “*You have now Madam obtained victory over two things, which the greatest princes in the world cannot at their wills subdue: the one is over fame,*” by which he means libel or slander. (See *Life, III, p. 154*, and Bacon's *Essay of Fame*.)

“The rough brake that virtue must go through” is well described by Bacon in his commentary upon Ecclesiastes *X, 1*, which we shall come to in a moment.

The only way to escape briery scratches is to avoid brakes altogether; and that is why

“Some run from brakes of vice and answer none.”

This refers to those who prefer to live a life of contemplation in retirement, free from the snares and temptations of the world; and answerable to none, because they are out of the eye and beyond the reach of men's condemnation or approval. This contemplative life was commended by Aristotle (*Works, V, p. 8*) but condemned by Bacon and Shakespeare on the ground that “*contemplation is a dream*” (*Life, I, p. 381*), and that “*good thoughts . . . are little better than good dreams except they be put in act*” (*Essay XI*); and we read in *King John (V, 1, 45)* “Be great in act as you have been in thought.” (For the rest see *BACONIANA* for April 1941, pp. 172-3.)

Now let us trace

## Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs 25

"Some condemned for a fault alone."

"Ye know the principle of philosophy to be that the corruption or degeneration of the best things is the worst" and that is why "in the fairest crystal every little grain or little cloud catches and displeases the eye, which in a duller stone would scarcely be noticed" (Bacon on Ecclesiastes X, 1).

And why

"The more fair and crystal is the sky

The uglier seem the clouds that in it fly."

(R2, I, 1, 41).

which in a duller sky would scarcely be noticed.

And why "in men of eminent virtue, their smallest faults (or defects) are readily seen, talked of, and severely censured, which in ordinary men would be either entirely unnoticed or readily excused." (Bacon on Eccles. X, 1.)

And why

"These men, carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect

. . . shall in the general censure take corruption from that particular fault." (Ham., I, 4, 30);

even as the sweet-smelling ointment takes corruption from putrid flies.

And why

"Some (are) condemned for a fault alone."

(Meas., II, 1, 40).

These men "condemned for a fault alone" must of necessity be eminent men, because Bacon and Shakespeare refused to condemn the ordinary man for his faults or defects; and although Ecclesiastes, X. 1, does not mention the ordinary man, yet Bacon and Shakespeare in dealing with this parable both introduce him, and both draw a clear distinction between him and the eminent man: Bacon in his commentary (*De Aug.*, VIII, II, parabola XI) as we have just seen above, and Shakespeare in *Lucrece*, where the ordinary man is represented by a little star, a crow, a poor groom, and a gnat; and the eminent man by the moon, the swan, the king, and the eagle; and that is why



## 26 Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs

"The Moon being clouded presently is miss'd  
But little stars may hide them when they list."  
(*Lucrece*, 1007).

And why

"The crow may bathe his coal-black wings in mire,  
And unperceived fly with the filth away;  
But if the like the snow-white swan desire,  
The stain upon his silver down will stay."

And why

"Gnats are unnoted wheresoe'er they fly,  
But eagles gaz'd upon with every eye."

And why

"Poor grooms are sightless night, Kings glorious day."  
Poor grooms are obscure and unnoticed, but kings are in the limelight; and, therefore, at disadvantage "*because their errors, though ever so small, are not overlooked*," and "as you know what great ones do the less will prattle of." (*T.N.*, I, 2, 33.) This, then, is "the rough brake that virtue must go through," and why Bacon wrote at the beginning of his "explanation" of Ecclesiastes X, 1, "*The condition of men eminent for virtue is exceedingly hard and miserable, because their errors, though ever so small, are not overlooked*."

Again:—

"*The corruption or degeneration of the best men is the worst.*"  
(*Life*, VII, p. 171).

And that is why

"The baser is he coming from a King  
To shame his hope with deeds degenerate."  
(*Lucrece*, 1002).

And why

"*The King's blood attainted of conspiracy against me is more base than caitiff's or peasant's.*"  
(*Nashe*, IV, p. 60).

And why

"Falsehood is worse in Kings than beggars."  
(*Cymb.*, III, p. 13).

Again:—

"*Honors make both virtue and vice conspicuous.*"  
(*Exempla Antithetorum*).

## Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs 27

And that is why

“The greater man the greater is the thing  
Be it good or bad that he shall undertake.”

(*Ed.*, III, II, 2, 434).

And why

“The mightier man the mightier is the thing  
That makes him honour’d or begets him hate.”

(*Lucrece*, 1004).

And why

“Greatest scandal waits on greatest state.”

(*Ib.*, 1006).

And why

“The dram of eale” (or the little evil of any kind)  
“haunting a nobleman,” “doth all the noble substance  
often dout” (or extinguish) “to his own scandal,” and  
therefore to his own loss of reputation.

Looking back at Wolsey’s speech (*H8*, I, 2, 71) we see the briars that scratched his virtue were traducers and “malicious censurers,” and in the duke’s speech in *Measure for Measure* (III, 2, 196) their names are “censure,” “back-wounding calumny” and “the slanderous tongue”; so in Bacon’s commentary upon Ecclesiastes X, 1, it is “*men of eminent virtue*” whose “*smallest faults (or defects) are severely censured*”; but not so the ordinary man, whose faults or defects “*would be either entirely unnoticed or readily excused*”; and Shakespeare’s reason for this is that

“Folly in fools bears not so strong a note

As foolery in the wise.” (*L.L.L.*, V, 2, 75);

and when Shakespeare wrote these words it is certain that he had Ecclesiastes X, 1, in his mind. How do we know? Because he has just written “Folly, in wisdom hatch’d,” which obviously refers to this parable.

Eminent men may deem themselves fortunate if they escape with a few briery scratches; for

*Shak.* “They that stand high have many blasts to shake them;

And if they fall, they dash themselves to pieces.”

(*R3*, I, 3, 259).

Then why not retire before the fall?

## 28 Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs

*Bacon:* "Retire men cannot when they will, neither will they when it were reason." (Essay XI).

*Shak.:* ". . . The art o' the court,  
As hard to leave as keep; . . ."  
(Cym., III, 3, 46).

*Bacon:* "The steps of honour are hard to climb . . ."  
(Antitheta).

*Shak.:* ". . . Whose top to climb  
Is certain falling," (Cym., III, 3, 47)

*Bacon:* "Slippery a-top, and dangerous to go down."  
(Antitheta).

*Shak.:* ". . . Or so slippery that  
The fear's as bad as falling."  
(Cym., III, 3, 48).

*Bacon:* "The standing is slippery, and the regress is either a downfall, or at least an eclipse, which is a melancholy thing." (Essay XI).

*Shak.:* "Which when they fall, as being slippery standers  
The love that lean'd on them as slippery too."  
(Troilus, III, 3, 84).

*Shak.:* "The great man down, you mark his favourite  
flies." (Ham., III, 2, 214).

*Shak.:* ". . . For those you make friends  
And give your hearts to, when they once perceive  
The least rub in your fortunes, fall away  
Like water from ye."  
(H8, II, 1, 127).

*Shak.:* "When fortune in her shifts and change of mood  
Spurns down her late belov'd, all his dependants  
Which labour'd after him to the mountain's top  
Even on their knees and hands, let him slip down,  
Not one accompanying his declining foot."  
(Timon, I, 1, 84).

*Shak.:* "O world! thy slippery turns!"  
(Coriol., IV, 4, 12).

*Shak.:* "O, how wretched  
Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favours!"  
(H8, III, 2, 367).



## Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs 29

**Shak.:** "Poor wretches, that depend  
On greatness' favour, dream as I have done;  
Wake and find nothing.'" (*Cym.*, V, 4, 128).

**Bacon:** "Who then to frail mortality shall trust,  
But limns the water, or but writes in dust."  
(*Works*, VII, p. 271).

**Nashe:** "Long depending hope frivolously defeated, than  
which there is no greater misery on earth; and so  
per consequens no men in earth more miserable than  
courtiers." (Vol. III, p. 263).

**Nashe:** "With less suit (I assure you) is the kingdom of  
heaven obtained than a suit for a pension or office  
to an earthly king, which though a man hath 20  
years followed and hath better than three parts and  
a half of a promise to have confirmed, yet if he have  
but a quarter of an enemy at court, it is cashiered  
and non-suited." (Vol. IV p. 153—1593).

If Bacon had put his name to these quotations from Nashe we could have understood them, because he was a courtier who, like Hamlet, lacked advancement; and whose enemy at court was Robert Cecil.

We have no evidence that William of Stratford was a courtier. Is it not strange, therefore, that he should write: "The art o' the court, as hard to leave as keep"?

Again, we have no evidence that Nashe was a courtier. What, then, should he know of their miseries? What earthly King or Queen had he followed for 20 years? and what enemy had he at court to check his advancement?

Bacon had followed an earthly Queen from a child, when she called him "my little lord—keeper"; certainly from 1573 to 1593, which is the date of publication of the last quotation from Nashe recorded above.

Does not Wolsey's career remind us of Bacon's commentary upon Proverbs XXIX, 21, in the *Advancement of Learning* (1605)?—"Here is signified that if a man begin too high a pitch in his favours, it doth commonly end in unkindness and unthankfulness." He was raised "by jumps and not by steps." The standing was "slippery," and he fell headlong down; but died, as Bacon would have

## 30 Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs

him die, with a quiet conscience; but even so to die requires some Resolution.

Bacon: "*Proceeding and resolving in all actions is necessary.*" (Colour, IV).

Bacon: "*Not to resolve is to resolve.*" (Ib.)

Shak.: "*To be once in doubt is once to be resolved.*" (Oth., III, 3, 180).

Shak.: "*I am now going to resolve him.*" (Meas., III, 1, 194).

Shak.: "*And now he is resolved to die.*" (Ib., III, 2, 262).

Bacon: "*There is nothing more awakens our resolve and readiness to die than the quieted conscience.*" (Essay "On Death").

Shak: "And I feel within me  
A peace above all earthly dignities,  
A still and quiet conscience."  
(H8, III, 2, 378).

But the unquiet conscience makes us cowards and shakes our resolution with what Bacon calls "sickly uncertainty." (Essay "On Death").

Shak.: "And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sickled o'er with the pale cast of thought,  
And enterprises of great pith and moment  
With this regard their currents turn awry,  
And lose the name of action."  
(Ham., III, 1, 54).

"And, like a man to double business bound,  
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,  
And both neglect." (Ib., III, 3, 41).

Bacon: "*So the unresolved man executes nothing.*" (Colour IV).

What conclusions may we draw from what is recorded in these few pages? First, we must remember that Bacon's "*triplex, primo, secundo, tertio*" was not published before October 1623; neither was his "*Qui laudat amicum,*" nor "*Laudes profusae et immodicae*"; neither was his "*Noli esse justus nimium*"; and, as William of Stratford died in

## Bacon-Shakespeare and Proverbs 31

1616, and as men do not read and write after death, it is impossible that he could have borrowed from the "*De Augmentis Scientiarum*."

As regards Bacon we must remember that "*modus, triplex, primo, secundo, tertio*" was in his mind as far back as 1595 (28 years before its appearance in print), when he wrote: "*Your Majesty shall see the true proportion of your favours, so as you may deliver them forth by measure, that they neither cause surfeit nor faintness.*"

The conclusion is, therefore, that Bacon can be traced in *Twelfth Night* by three parables, Proverbs XXIX, 21; Proverbs XXVII, 14; and last but not least by Ecclesiastes X, 1 (*T.N.*, III, 1, 75):—

"But wise men, folly-fall'n, quite taint their wit,"  
which has already been dealt with.

## THE CREATORS OF MODERN ENGLISH.

(Reprinted from *Baconiana*, April, 1905).

IT is impossible to study the Elizabethan drama without being struck by the Protean versatility of its authors. In swift and dizzying rotation their poetic souls seem to have been metamorphosed into those of Physicians, Divines, Musicians, Courtiers, Florists, Kings, Scientists, Philosophers, Lawyers, and Philologists. They themselves seem to have realised their Protean characteristics, and references to the fable are numerous:—

“I have as many shapes as Proteus had.”

—Anon. (*Sir John Oldcastle* I. 2), 1600.

“I can add colors to the chameleon,

Change shapes with Proteus for advantages.”

—Shakespeare (3 *Henry VI.* III. 2), 1592.

“Proteus ever changed shapes until he was straitened and held fast.”—Bacon *Advancement of Learning*, 1605.

“He then devised himself how to disguise,  
For by his mighty science he could take  
As many forms and shapes in seeming wise  
As ever Proteus to himself could make.”

—Spenser (*Fairy Queen* I. ii. 10), 1590.

“He wandered in the world in strange array . . .  
Disguised in thousand shapes that none might him bewray.”

—*Ibid.* (III. 6).

“I will play the changeling,  
I’ll change myself into a thousand shapes  
To court our brave spectators; I’ll change my postures  
Into a thousand different variations  
To draw even ladies’ eyes to follow mine.  
I’ll change my voice into a thousand tones  
To chain attention: not a changeling, father?  
None but myself shall play the changeling.”

—Middleton (*Spanish Gypsy* II. 1), 1653.

“Oh the miserable  
Condition of a prince who, though he vary  
More shapes than Proteus in his mind and manners,



He cannot win an universal suffrage  
From the many-headed monster multitude."

—Massinger (*Emperor of the East* II. 1), 1631—1632.

It is in their rôle of "great philologues" that they now claim attention.

In the time immediately prior to the advent of the dramatists the English language was a slighted, poor, inexpressive and unseemly thing. Finding it an inefficient means of expression the dramatists deliberately constructed a new one.

At that time Englishmen had to pick up their mother tongue as best they could. "The first English Grammar was not published until 1586. Little, if any, English was taught even in the lower classes of the Grammar schools, and this fact accounts for the wonderful varieties in spelling proper names common to the period. When there is scarcity of writing and printing, language is unsettled and variable."\* Macaulay, describing an English county gentleman of William III.'s time, observes:—

"His language and pronunciation were such as we should now expect to have only from the most ignorant clowns. His oaths, coarse jests and scurrilous terms of abuse were uttered with the broadest accents of his province."

One hundred years earlier, when language was even more unformed, the surrounding speech must have struck the ear almost as strangely as a foreign tongue.

In Mrs. Everett Greene's *Letters of Illustrious Ladies* there is quoted an epistle from Elizabeth, Duchess of Norfolk, to her brother, Lord Stafford. It runs:—

"Brorder I pra you to ssand me my ness dorety by kaas I know kon dessess se sal not lake hass long hass I leffe and he wold be hord by me at hor haless I kyng he be hone kyne tha ffaless drab and kouk and nat ben I hade hadehar to my couffiert."

Mrs. Greene appends the following key as the best rendering she can offer:—

"Brother, I pray you to send me my niece Dorothy, because I know her conditions—she shall not lack as long as I live, and you would be heard by me at (all), or else I think you be own kin to

---

\*Goadby, *The England of Shakespeare*, p. 101.

## 34 The Creators of Modern English.

the false drab and cook: had it not been. I had had her to my comfort.'†

This is an extreme instance, but there is little doubt that the spelling, pronunciation and grammar of the Elizabethan gentry were very uncouth. The speech of the illiterate lower orders must have been many degrees more discordant, reading and writing being accomplishments practically beyond their ken.

The playhouse frequenters were almost, if not entirely, "vagrant persons, masterless men, thieves, horse-stealers, whoremongers, cozeners, coneycatchers, contrivers of treason and other idle and dangerous persons." In *The Roaring Girl*, Middleton has preserved a specimen of their uncouth jargon:—

*Trapdoor*.—"Ben mort, shall you and I heave a bough, mill a ken, or nip a bung, and then we'll couch a hogshead under the ruffians, and there you shall wap with me, and I'll niggle with you."

*Moll*.—"Out, you damned impudent rascal!"

*Trap*.—"Cut benar whids, and hold your fambles and your stamps."

*L. Noland*.—"Nay, nay, Moll, why art thou angry? what was his gibberish?"

*Moll*.—"Marry, this, my lord, says he: 'Ben mort,' good wench, 'shall you and I heave a bough, mil a ken, or nip a bung?' shall you and I rob a house or cut a purse?"

*Moll*.—"Come, you rogue, sing with me."

### SONG.

By *Moll* and *Tearcat*.

"A gage of ben rom-house  
In a bousing ken of Rom-ville,  
Is benar than a caster,  
Peck, pennam, lap, or popler,  
Which we mill in deuse a vile.  
O I wud lib all the lightmans  
O I wud lib all the darkmans  
By the salomon, under the ruffians,  
By the salomon, in the hartmans,  
And scour the queer cramp ring,  
And couch till a palliard docked my dell,

---

†Extracted from *Social England*, Traill, Vol. III., pp. 244—246.

So my bousy nab might skew rom-bouse well.  
Avast to the pad, let us bing;  
Avast to the pad, let us bing."

All.— "Fine knaves, i' faith!"

J. Dapper.— "The grating of ten new cart-wheels, and the grunting of five hundred hogs coming from Rumford market, cannot make a worse noise than this canting language does in my ears."

Burns, coming from the plough, uttered his inspirations in a dialect familiar to his auditors. So also the West Country poet, William Barnes, and others too numerous to mention; but the Elizabethan dramatists, though for the most part *canaille* writing for the patronage of *canaille*, voiced their poetry in pure and academic English.

It is not nowadays an every-day occurrence for an actor to be able to write a good play, still less usual for him to be able to express himself in poetic form. Probably the "gay boys lewd and vain," on whose favour the Elizabethan playwright subsisted, would have been equally if not better pleased by a knock-about farce, or a Morrice dance by Kemp. It seems, however, to have been *de rigueur* that the Elizabethan hacks should write in swinging blank verse and spin their drumming decasyllables from their own brains.

The publication, now in progress under the auspices of the Philological Society, of Dr. Murray's *New English Dictionary* renders it possible to say with approximate accuracy how much of the English language we owe to the fellowship of great spirits under consideration. *The New English Dictionary* is a Registry where may be found recorded the birthday and parent, so far as known, of every English word now or ever in use. An examination of this work will, therefore, enable anyone by the Law of Average to arrive at an approximate estimate of the number of words coined in certain periods by certain writers. The analysis of a sequence of 143 pages, equal to 429 columns, selected at random, yielded so incredible a result that I thought it desirable to examine further. My first investigation having by chance fallen upon a group of words including the Latin prefix *Ex*, I decided to examine a further

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sequence of 143 pages which should include the Greek prefix *Ge*. No author coins from a tongue with which he is not sufficiently familiar to *think* in, and Greek being "neglected and despised," I thought it probable that few words from this source were likely to have come into being during the Elizabethan era. This reasoning having proved correct, it will, I think, be sufficiently approximate to strike an average between the Latin and Greek groups, from which average we can arrive with sufficient accuracy to the probable total aggregate. As it will be many years before the publication of Dr. Murray's great undertaking is completed, it is necessary, for the time being, to be content with merely a rough total.

The Editor informs me that the work when finished will occupy between 15,000 and 16,000 folio pages, each containing three columns. It will, therefore, be well upon the safe side to assume that each sequence of 143 pages represents one-hundredth part of the entire work. Calculating on this basis, we are indebted to the poet Shakespeare for enriching our tongue with the astonishing total of 9,450 newly-coined words.\* Our obligations to other contemporary play-wrights, and to the philosophers, Francis Bacon and Thomas Browne, are as follows:—

Bacon..	..	..	..	..	1,950
Browne	..	..	..	..	2,850
Beaumont and Fletcher	..	..			975
Chapman	..	..	..	..	1,500
Dekker	..	..	..	..	350
Day	..	..	..	..	50
Ford	..	..	..	..	200
Field	..	..	..	..	—
Greene	..	..	..	..	800

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\*It is questionable whether Shakespeare has not been credited by Dr. Murray with a larger total than he is entitled to. Mr. George Stronach has pointed out many instances of words wrongly attributed to Shakespeare, but owing, in reality, to his contemporary, Bacon. The fact that there is a Shakespeare Concordance has in all probability influenced the attribution of many words to Shakespeare which Dr. Murray's readers might on severer search have found elsewhere.



# The Creators of Modern English. 37

Heywood	..	..	..	..	350
Jonson	..	..	..	..	1,350
Kyd	..	..	..	..	—
Lodge	..	..	..	..	100
Lyly	..	..	..	..	350
Marlowe	..	..	..	..	525
Marston	..	..	..	..	650
Massinger	..	..	..	..	475
Middleton	..	..	..	..	300
Nash	..	..	..	..	1,350
Peele	..	..	..	..	150
Porter	..	..	..	..	100
Rowley	..	..	..	..	150
Shirley	..	..	..	..	150
Spenser	..	..	..	..	1,200
Tourneur	..	..	..	..	50

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15,925

Add Shakespeare .. .. 9,450

---

Total .. 25,375

Although the totals attributed to the various philologists differ in quantity, the figures quoted must be considered in comparison to the amount of literature from which they are extracted. Thus regarded, Tourneur's modest 50 words is on a par with the 2,000 of the more prolific Bacon, Tourneur's being found merely in two plays.

Viewed thus, Sir Thomas Browne's total remains even more extraordinary than it already appears.

Sir John Evans, in his Introduction to *Hydriotaphia*, observes, "The language in which most of Browne's writings are composed is very peculiar, and, in some respects, un-English. The intense Latinity of his style is almost everywhere apparent, and, indeed, anyone comparing the Latin version of the *Religio Medici* with the English, would feel inclined to pronounce the former the original, and the latter a too literal translation. Dr. Johnson says with regard to Sir Thomas Browne's style,

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that it is 'a tissue of many languages; a mixture of heterogeneous words brought together from distant regions, with terms originally appropriated to one art and drawn by violence into the service of another. But his innovations are sometimes pleasing, and his temerities happy.' Sir Thomas Browne says of himself, in the *Religio Medici*: 'For my own part, besides the jargon and *patois* of several provinces, I understand no less than six languages.' "

The erudition and Latinity of Sir Thomas Browne are matters of every-day note. As an illustration of his fondness for Latin coinages, a recent reviewer quoted the following passage from *Christian Morals*:—

"The Compage of all Physical Truths is not so closely jointed but opposition may find intrusion, nor always so closely maintained as not to suffer attrition. Many Positions seem quodlibetically constituted, and, like a Delphian Blade, will cut on both sides. Some Truths seem almost Falshoods, and some Falshoods almost Truths; wherein Falshood and Truth seem almost equibriously stated, and but a few grains of distinction to bear down the ballance."

Great and admitted as were Browne's capacities in diction, the actors could without effort have given points to him. Compare, for instance, the following passage from Webster's *White Devil* III, 1., 1612.

"Most *literated* judges, please your Lordships so to *connive* your judgements to the view of this debauched and *diversivolent* woman, who such a black *concatenation* of mischief hath *effected* that to *extirp* the memory of it must be the *consummation* of her and her *projections*."

The love of word-making seems at times to have attained the proportions of a disease. Not infrequently we find the dramatists revelling in mere verbal fireworks.

"My leg is not altogether unpropitiously shaped. There's a word—'unpropitiously'!"

"So help me your sweet bounty you have the most graceful presence, applausive elocuty, amazing volubility, polished adornation, delicious affability."

Marston (*Antonio and Mellida*, part I., IV. 2), 1602.

It was a common device to introduce a new word, supported and expounded by a synonym; at other times we find that upon some novelty making its introductory bow,

## The Creators of Modern English. 39

special attention was directed to its excellence. Thus:—

“He is too peregrinate, as I may call it  
(*Nathaniel draws out his table-book.*)  
A most singular and choice epithet.”  
Shakespeare (*Love's Labour Lost* V. 1) 1588.

“I scorn to retort the obtuse jest of a fool.  
(*Balurdo draws out his writing-tables and writes.*)  
Retort and obtuse, good words, very good words.”  
Marston (*Antonio and Mellida*, pt. II., I. 3), 1602.

“Here's most amorous weather,  
*Amorous* weather!  
Is not amorous a good word?”  
Middleton (*Roaring Girl* V. 1), 1611.

As a coiner and connoisseur of language, Bacon was pre-eminently conspicuous. When a young lawyer, it was noted by a contemporary that “a marked feature of the new pleader was the unusual words wherewith he had spangled his speech.”

In the *Promus* we perceive Bacon apparently in the very act of word-making. Jotted down we note *real*, *brazed*, *peradventure*. Next to another entry, *uprouse*, stands the crucible of its creation, *abedd—rouse you—owt bed*.

Bacon and the dramatists were great artists in the elegancies of speech. Folio III of the *Promus* is endorsed “Formularies and Elegancies.” It no doubt forms part of one of those collections by way of “provision or preparatory store for the furniture of speech and readiness of elocution,” which Bacon recommends in *The Advancement of Learning*. In this MS. we perceive the great Word Artist in his workshop. As Dr. Abbott observes, the world ought not willingly to let die so courtly a compliment as entry No. 1196,

“I have not said all my prayers till I have bid you good-morrow,”

or so graceful an epistolary conclusion as entry No. 1398.

“Wishing you all happiness, and myself opportunity to do you service.”

Not only the fabric of modern language, but many of our common and every-day salutations, seem to have first

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come into existence at this period. Dr. Murray credits the earliest printed appearance of *Good-bye*, as a form of address at parting, to Shakespeare. We see it in process of evolution as follows:—

1588. "I thank your worship. God be wy you!"  
—Shakespeare (*Love's Labour's Lost* III. 1).

1591. "God b'uy my lord!"  
—*Ibid.* (1 *Henry VI.* III. 2).

1600. "Gallants, God buoye all!"  
—Heywood (2 *Edward IV.*).

1607. "Farewell, God b'y you Mistress!"  
—Middleton (*Roaring Girl*).

In his essay, *Of Travel*, Bacon writes, "When a traveller returns home let him . . . prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country." In the *Promus* we find him thus at work striving to embellish the English tongue and engraft elegancies of foreign extraction. Dr. Abbott comments upon his efforts as follows:—

"Independently of other interests, many of the notes in the *Promus* are valuable as illustrating how Bacon's all-pervasive method of thought influenced him, even in the merest trifles. *Analogy* is always in his mind. If you can say 'good-morrow,' why should you not also say 'good-dawning' (entry 1206)? If you can anglicise some French words, why not others? Why not say 'good-swoear' (*sic.* entry 1190) for 'good-night,' and 'good-matens' (1192) for 'good-morning'? Instead of 'twilight,' why not substitute 'vice-light' (entry 1420)? Instead of 'impudent,' how much more forcible is 'brazed' (entry 1418)! On the lines of this suggestive principle Francis Bacon pursues his experimental path, whether the experiments be small or great—sowing, as Nature sows, superfluous seeds, in order that out of the conflict the strongest may prevail. For before we laugh at Bacon for his abortive word-experiments, we had better wait for the issue of Dr. Murray's great dictionary which will tell us to how many of these experiments we are indebted for words now current in our language.



“Many interesting philological, or literary, questions will be raised by the publication of the *Promus*. The phrase ‘good-dawning,’ for example, just mentioned, is found only once in Shakespeare, put into the mouth of the affected Oswald (*Lear* II. 2, 1), ‘*Good-dawning* to thee, friend.’ The quartos are so perplexed by this strange phrase that they alter ‘dawning’ into ‘even,’ although a little farther on Kent welcomes the ‘comfortable beams’ of the rising sun. Obviously, ‘dawning’ is right; but did the phrase suggest itself independently to Bacon and Shakespeare? Or did Bacon make it current among Court circles, and was it picked up by Shakespeare afterwards? Or did Bacon jot down this particular phrase, not from analogy, but from hearing it in the Court? Here, again, we must wait for Dr. Murray’s dictionary to help us.”

Unfortunately, Dr. Murray’s readers seem to have missed *good-dawning*. The expression is unnoted in the dictionary.

In creating strange words and giving them currency by weaving them into familiar dialogue, the dramatists well knew on how momentous a task they were employed. It would be quite wrong to imagine that the poets’ vocabularies were fortuitous or dropped unconsciously from their pens. Nash asserts that he was compelled to resort to boisterous compound words in order to compensate for the great defect of the English tongue, which “of all languages most swarmeth with the single money of monosyllables.”\*

In this “cleansing of our language from barbarism” and substitution of classicisms and exotics it has been shown how prodigious a share each dramatist bore. In the *quality* of the coinage I confess myself unable to detect any appreciable distinction between the efforts of the actors on the one hand and of the philosophers on the other. In his *Apology for Actors* (1612) Heywood legitimately glories that “the English tongue, the most harsh, uneven, broken and mixed language in the world, now fashioned by the dramatic art, had grown to a most perfect language.”

Whether this new and wonderful creation was appre-

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\*See “Dictionary of National Biography.” Vol. 40, p. 108.

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ciated by the theatrical scum, History has not recorded. If, in Caliban, Shakespeare has drawn the wild beast monster multitude, the words of Prospero may, as Mrs. Pott recently suggested, have a new and unexpected meaning.

"I pitied thee,  
Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour  
One thing or other. When thou didst not, savage,  
Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like  
A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes  
With *words* that made them known."

*Caliban*.—"You taught me language; and my profit on't  
Is, I know how to curse! The red plague rid you  
For learning me your language!"

HAROLD BAYLEY.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

TO THE EDITORS OF BACONIANA.

Uandilla, New York,

August 9th, 1941.

Dear Sirs,—In the Review of "Foundations Unearthed," by Maria Bauer, in July BACONIANA, the critic says:

"Unfortunately we are not clear what has been discovered," and then proceeds to give full evidence of a complete misunderstanding of the purpose and achievement of the Author. In the interests of fair play, may I reply to your critic?

On the very first page of the Foreword it is stated, "It is not intended that this brochure shall be in any way considered a finished study or a complete record of the findings—the purpose is to enlighten those who may be interested in these researches . . ." and those familiar with the Bacon-Shakespeare Controversy are then mentioned specifically. Then in order to acquaint those people who are not familiar with the life of Francis Bacon as the scholars and decipherers maintain it to be, Mrs. Bauer gave some data on this subject. But evidently her statements aroused the ire of her critic—who had ideas of his own. Just the lamentable feud among the faithful—when it is of such prime importance to remember that no one *yet* has accurate information. Until that last word has been spoken and proven, the object of the Bacon Society "to encourage the study of Francis Bacon . . . his influence on his own and succeeding times . . ." should indeed be the encouragement of the efforts of all sincere explorers and not their condemnation.

And so Mrs. Bauer's pamphlet is designed as an appeal to Americans (only) to petition for the opening of a vault within the foundations of the First Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg, Virginia, where the author is persuaded many valuable documents from the pen of Francis Bacon are hidden. Nor is Mrs. Bauer's request inconsistent, considering that she herself located and had unearthed the old foundations of the church 62 feet west of the previously accepted location. By the same method she used in locating the old foundation she then indicated the location of a vault within the area. At that point she called in the firm of Hans Lundburg, Inc., of New York, that is experienced in making inter-terrestrial measurements, locating copper ore and especially equipped to conduct an "equi-potential" survey. After completing their survey they reported:

"At a depth of 16 to 20 feet and about 10 feet square, centered exactly where the 1711 line east of William and Mary crosses the old foundations, lies a body partially filled and much larger than an ordinary tomb."

So Mrs. Bauer *has* discovered a vault that no one has ever known existed. According to the engineering report it is partially filled. By the same processes that she used in locating the foundations and the vault, Mrs. Bauer *now* maintains that records vital to the restoration of Francis Bacon to his right place in the Sun, *were* therein concealed. It would be a very simple matter to open the vault that would disturb nothing but the earth and settle the question. But Mrs. Bauer has encountered the same resistance to her request that was met with in the case of the Spencer tomb. Hence her appeal to the American people, over the heads of the obstructionists.

But is it possible that her critic in *BACONIANA* is so sceptical of her effort because she said that Bacon *might* place New Atlantis in America? Or that Bacon *might* have some ideas for eliminating war from the earth? Or does he resent her plea to America for "the hope of salvation of their oppressed and misguided brothers in Europe?"

Sincerely yours,

ANNE KATHLEEN MEEKER.

TO THE EDITORS OF "BACONIANA."

Knoll Road,

Camberley,

Surrey.

#### RECORD OF THE CONFINEMENT OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

Dear Sirs,—It is to be hoped that further information may be elicited regarding the record of the confinement of Queen Elizabeth which existed in the archives at Windsor Castle till it was burnt by Queen Victoria, as stated by Viscount Mersey on the testimony of Lady Wakehurst.

The occurrence of the confinement seems a legitimate subject of historical research.

The book, "The Marriage of Elizabeth Tudor," by Alfred Dodd, published 1940 by Rider and Co., adduces such a mass of evidence that no open-minded reader can be left in any doubt that Queen Elizabeth had two sons by Robert, Earl of Leicester, to whom she was secretly married in the house of Lord Pembroke before a number of witnesses late in September 1560.

The elder of the two sons was Francis Bacon, born in January 1561, and baptized on the 25th of that month, and the second was Robert Earl of Essex, born in 1567. The Earl of Leicester was married to Amy Robsart at the time he begat Francis Bacon, and she came to her death by violence at Cumnor Place on 8th September 1560.

Mr. Dodd, on page 86, points out that Francis, after long efforts to gain recognition from Elizabeth of his right as a Tudor, finally realized that he could not hope for such recognition, as it reflected on the honour of the Queen and even on himself. She might have been accused of connivance with the death of Amy Robsart, certainly of a *liaison* with a married man.

He goes on to say that these circumstances did not apply to Essex, who, as the son of a private marriage, could have been



announced as the Queen's successor, her "natural heir," without any serious controversy being aroused. "I think there can be no doubt that the Queen intended, at one time, at all events, that he should be named for the Succession."

It is at this point that it becomes important to know the date and the circumstances of Queen Elizabeth's confinement, the record of which was destroyed by Queen Victoria.

If Queen Elizabeth contemplated making her younger son her Successor, such a record would obviously be necessary in view of her secret marriage to Leicester. But the record is now gone, and its destruction by Queen Victoria seems unwarranted. It had been preserved among the secret State records for over two centuries by successive sovereigns who had only the right of trustee over it.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) G. A. PERCY.

Dymons Hill House,  
Tiverton.

TO THE EDITORS OF "BACONIANA."

Dear Sirs,—The photograph, *possibly* of a portrait of Bacon, excites one's interest to a high degree; so much the more in my case from a lifelong familiarity in continental museums with the works of the Dutch and Flemish Schools.

van Mierevelt, father, it is said, refused all the flattering offers made him by Charles I, with a view to getting him to England. On the other hand, his son and his pupils painted so exactly like him, often under his supervision, that the two thousand or so works associated with his name are of uncertain attribution and many of them cannot be from the brush of van Mierevelt senior.

My best efforts here in exile have failed to ascertain whether the son or any of the pupils of the school crossed the North Sea in 1619 or earlier, even though the date allows.

Probably some of your readers may even in war time have access to wider sources of information of this point. It is to be hoped.

As to the identity of the subject much more critical information seems to be called for and some investigation into the origin of the portrait. Portraits do not often suddenly appear from nowhere. They seem to do so sometimes. A case in point was a lovely Albani painted about 1580 which was discovered in an attic in Bristol, where it had dwelt 100 or more years.

Another case was a portrait by Rembrandt, also unrecognised by an "expert" (*sic*) art dealer in the same city and entirely without a history. Both genuine and noble works.

May I add that the line or shadow on the left of the second photograph, running along the face, strongly reminds one of the obvious mask of the Droeshout?

Finally, did Bacon really have so dolicho cephalic a head? I doubt it.

Yours sincerely,

SALVAMEN.



## WHO WROTE LOVE'S LABOUR LOST?

### "BACONIANA" PRIZE COMPETITION.

Two prizes, the first of £10 10s. od. and a second which will only be awarded if there are six or more competitors, of £5 5s. od., are offered by the Council of the Bacon Society for the best essays entitled "Shakspeare and not Bacon wrote '*Love's Labour's Lost*'."

#### RULES.

Competitors must discuss the following points:—

- (a) The origin of much of the humour of "*Love's Labour's Lost*" is Gray's Inn gossip and slang;
- (b) The opinion of Dr. Dover Wilson that to credit "that amazing piece of virtuosity to a butcher boy who left school at thirteen or even to one whose education was only what a grammar school and residence in a little provincial borough could provide is to invite one either to believe in miracles or to disbelieve in the man from Stratford";
- (c) The dramatist's acquaintance with the contemporary history of the French Court, its personnel and diplomacy.

Essays must not exceed 1,500 words and must be type-written on one side of the paper only.

The author's full name, address and occupation must be stated and each essay must be accompanied by the coupon detached from this page.

Essays should reach the office of BACONIANA, 240, High Holborn, London, W.C. 2, by registered post, by the 28th February, 1942, and the result of the competition will be announced in the April issue.

The Adjudicator is Mr. Ivor Brown, the well-known author and dramatic critic, whose decision is final. No entries can be accepted from members or associates of the Bacon Society.

The Editors of BACONIANA reserve the right to publish the prize winning essays.

MSS cannot be returned.

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST

Competition Coupon  
to be attached to entry.

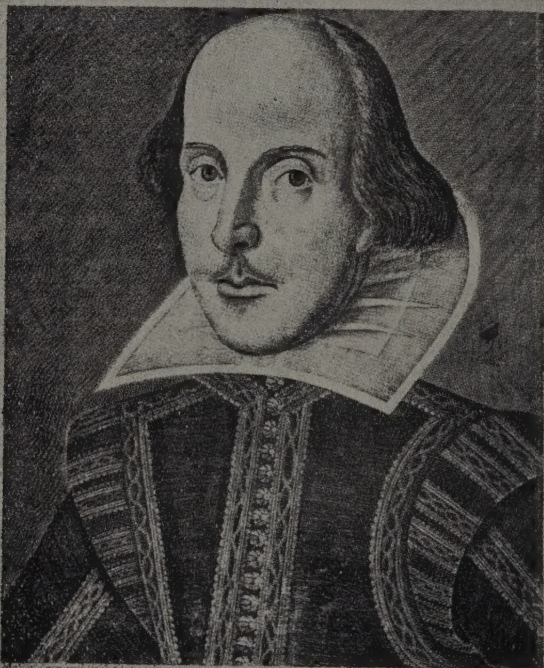






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FRONTISPIECE OF 1623 SHAKESPEARE FOLIO

Compare this with Shakespeare's self-exaltation in Sonnet 62:—

"Methinks no face so gracious is as mine."